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religion of this exceptionally interesting tribe, numbering, according to the latest census returns, 807 individuals, which inhabits the Nīlgiri plateau. I shall, therefore, content myself with recording the rambling notes made by myself during occasional visits to Ootacamund and Paikāra, supplemented by extracts from the book just referred to, and the writings of Harkness and other pioneers of the Nīlgiris.

The Todas maintain a large-horned race of semi-domesticated buffaloes, on whose milk and its products (butter and ney)* they still depend largely, though to a less extent than in bygone days before the establishment of the Ootacamund bazar, for existence. It has been said that "a Toda's worldly wealth is judged by the number of buffaloes he owns. Witness the story in connection with the recent visit to India of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. A clergyman, who has done mission work among the Todas, generally illustrates Bible tales through the medium of a magic-lantern. One chilly afternoon, the Todas declined to come out of their huts. Thinking they required humouring like children, the reverend gentleman threw on the screen a picture of the Prince of Wales, explaining the object of his tour, and, thinking to impress the Todas, added 'The Prince is exceedingly wealthy, and is bringing out a retinue of two hundred people.' 'Yes, yes,' said an old man, wagging his head sagely, 'but how many buffaloes is he bringing?"

The Todas lead for the most part a simple pastoral life. But I have met with more than one man who had served, or who was still serving Government in the modest capacity of a forest guard, and I have heard of

* Ney = ghi or clarified butter.

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others who had been employed, not with conspicuous success, on planters' estates. The Todas consider it beneath their dignity to cultivate land. A former Collector of the Nīlgiris granted them some acres of land for the cultivation of potatoes, but they leased the land to the Badagas, and the privilege was cancelled. In connection with the Todas' objection to work, it is recorded that when, on one occasion, a mistake about the ownership of some buffaloes committed an old Toda to jail, it was found impossible to induce him to work with the convicts, and the authorities, unwilling to resort to hard remedies, were compelled to save appearances by making him an overseer. The daily life of a Toda woman has been summed up as lounging about the mad or mand (Toda settlement), buttering and curling her hair, and cooking. The women have been described as free from the ungracious and menial-like timidity of the generality of the sex in the plains. When Europeans (who are greeted as swāmi or god) come to a mand, the women crawl out of their huts, and chant a monotonous song, all the time clamouring for tips (inām). Even the children are so trained that they clamour for money till it is forthcoming. As a rule, the Todas have no objection to Europeans entering into their huts, but on more than one occasion I have been politely asked to take my boots off before crawling in on the stomach, so as not to desecrate the dwelling-place. Writing in 1868, Dr. J. Shortt makes a sweeping statement that "most of the women have been debauched by Europeans, who, it is sad to observe, have introduced diseases to which these innocent tribes were once strangers, and which are slowly but no less surely sapping their once hardy and vigorous constitutions. The effects of intemperance and disease (syphilis) combined are becoming more and more

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Avalanchē to Si[illegible] witnessed an interesting custom. 233
The Toda family had come to a halt on the far side of the 166
path; the females seated themselves on the grass, and awaited the passing of the sacred herd. This herd, which had travelled by a recognised route across country, has to cross the bridle-path some two or three hundred yards above the Avalanchē-Sispāra sign-post. Both the ordinary and sacred herd were on the move together. The former passed up the Sispāra path, while the latter crossed in a line, and proceeded slightly down the hill, eventually crossing the stream and up through the shōlas over the steep hills on the opposite side of the valley. As soon as the sacred herd had crossed the bridle-path, the Toda men, having put down all their household utensils, went to where the women and girls were sitting, and carried them, one by one, over the place where the buffaloes had passed, depositing them on the path above. One of the men told me that the [562]
females are not allowed to walk over the track covered [778]
by the sacred herd, and have to be carried whenever it is necessary to cross it. This herd has a recognised tract when migrating, and is led by the old buffaloes, who appear to know the exact way."

The tenure under which lands are held by the Todas 423
is summed up as follows by Mr. R. S. Benson in his report on the revenue settlement of the Nilgiris, 1885. "The earliest settlers, and notably Mr. Sullivan, strongly advocated the claim of the Todas to the absolute proprietary right to the plateau [as lords of the soil]; but another school, led by Mr. Lushington, has strongly combated these views, and apparently regarded the Todas as merely occupiers under the ryotwari system in force generally in the Presidency. From the earliest times 427
the Todas have received from the cultivating Badagas 648

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427 648 an offering or tribute, called gudu or basket of grain, partly in compensation for the land taken up by the latter for cultivation, and so rendered unfit for grazing purposes, but chiefly as an offering to secure the favour, or avert the displeasure of the Todas, who, like the Kurumbas (*q.v.*), are believed by the Badagas to have [754] necromantic powers over their health and that of their herds. The European settlers also bought land in 648 Ootacamund from them, and to this day the Government 423 pays them the sum of Rs. 150 per mensem, as compensation for interference with the enjoyment of their pastoral rights in and about Ootacamund. Their position was, however, always a matter of dispute, until it was finally laid down in the despatch of the Court of Directors, dated 21st January, 1843. It was then decided that the Todas possessed nothing more than a prescriptive right to enjoy the privilege of pasturing their herds, on payment of a small tax, on the State lands. The Court desired that they should be secured from interference by settlers in the enjoyment of their mands, and of their spots appropriated to religious rites. Accordingly pattas were issued, granting to each mand three bullahs (11·46 acres) of land. In 1863 Mr. Grant obtained permission to make a fresh allotment of nine bullahs (34·38 acres) to each mand on the express condition that the land should be used for pasturage only, and that no right to sell the land or the wood on it should be thereby conveyed. It may be added that the so-called Toda lands are now regarded as the inalienable common property of the Toda community, and unauthorised alienation is checked by the imposition of a penal rate of assessment (G.O., 18th April 1882). Up to the date of this order, however, alienations by sale or lease were of frequent occurrence. It remains to be seen whether

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the present orders and subordinate staff will be more adequate than those that went before to check the practices referred to." With the view of protecting the Toda lands, Government took up the management of these lands in 1893, and framed rules, under the Forest Act, for their management, the rights of the Todas over them being in no way affected by the rules of which the following is an abstract :—

1. No person shall fell, girdle, mark, lop, uproot, or burn, or strip off the bark or leaves from, or otherwise damage any tree growing on the said lands, or remove the timber, or collect the natural produce of such trees or lands, or quarry or collect stone, lime, gravel, earth or manure upon such lands, or break up such lands for cultivation, or erect buildings of any description, or cattle kraals; and no person or persons, other than the Todas named in the patta concerned, shall graze cattle, sheep, or goats upon such lands, unless he is authorised so to do by the Collector of Nilgiris, or some person empowered by him.

2. The Collector may select any of the said lands to be placed under special fire protection.

3. No person shall hunt, beat for game, or shoot in such lands without a license from the Collector.

4. No person shall at any time set nets, traps, or snares for game on such lands.

5. All Todas in the Nilgiri district shall, in respect of their own patta lands, be exempt from the operation of the above rules, and shall be at liberty to graze their own buffaloes, to remove fuel and grass for their domestic requirements, and to collect honey or wax upon such lands. They shall likewise be entitled to, and shall receive free permits for building or repairing their mands and temples.

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6. The Collector shall have power to issue annual permits for the cultivation of grass land only in Toda pattas by Todas themselves, free of charge, or otherwise as Government may, from time to time, direct; but no Toda shall be at liberty to permit any person, except a Toda, to cultivate, or assist in the cultivation of such lands.

In 1905, the Todas petitioned Government against the prohibition by the local Forest authorities of the burning of grass on the downs, issued on the ground of danger to the shōlas (wooded ravines or groves). This yearly burning of the grass was claimed by the Todas to improve it, and they maintained that their cattle were deteriorating for want of good fodder. Government ruled that the grass on the plateau has been burnt by the inhabitants at pleasure for many years without any appreciable damage to forest growth, and the practice should not be disturbed.

Concerning the social organisation of the Todas, Mr. Breeks states that they are "divided into two classes, which cannot intermarry, viz., Dêvalyâl and Tarserzhâl. The first class consists of Peiki class, corresponding in some respects to Brâhmans; the second of the four remaining classes the Pekkan, Kuttan, Kenna, and Todi. A Peiki woman may not go to the village of the Tarserzhâl, although the women of the latter may visit Peikis." The class names given by Mr. Breeks were readily recognised by the Todas whom I interviewed, but they gave Têrthâl (comprising superior Peikis) and Târthâl as the names of the divisions. They told me that, when a Têrthâl woman visits her friends at a Târthâl mand, she is not allowed to enter the mand, but must stop at a distance from it. Todas as a rule cook their rice in butter-milk, but, when a Têrthâl woman pays a visit to

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595 851 842 805 824 when they return to the mand. The time is determined, in the vicinity of Ootacamund, by the opening of the flowers of *Onothera tetraptera* (evening primrose), a garden escape called by the Todas āru mani pūv (six o'clock flower), which opens towards evening.* It may 765 be noted that, at the second funeral of a male, a miniature bow and three arrows are burnt with various other articles within the stone circle (azaram).

648 585 A few years ago (1902), the Todas, in a petition to Government, prayed for special legislation to legalise their marriages on the lines of the Malabar Marriage Act. The Government was of opinion that legislation was unnecessary, and that it was open to such of the Todas as were willing to sign the declaration prescribed by section 10 of the Marriage Act III of 1872 to contract legal marriages under the provision of that Act. The Treasury Deputy Collector of the Nīlgiris was appointed Registrar of Toda marriages. No marriage has been registered up to the present time.

847 178 The practice of infanticide among the Todas is best summed up in the words of an aged Toda during an interview with Colonel Marshall.† "I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan (the first English pioneer of the Nilgiris) visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children, but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it. I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle (putkuli), but formerly there was only one for the whole family. We did not kill them to please any god, but because it was our custom. The mother never nursed the child, and the parents did

* I have seen this plant growing on the guns in front of the Pulhān bungalow.
† *Op. cit.*

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765 separating to select a new partner, each couple saluted by bowing the head, and raising thereto the feet of the other, covered by the putkūli. [I have seen women rapidly recover from the outward manifestations of grief, and clamour for money.] From time to time the company of mourners was reinforced by late arrivals from distant mands, and, as each detachment, now of men and now of women, came in view across the open downs, one could not fail to be reminded of the gathering of the clans on some Highland moor. The resemblance was heightened by the distant sound as of pipers, produced by the Kota band (with two police constables in attendance), composed of four Kotas, who made a weird noise with drums and flutes as they drew near the scene of action. The band, on arrival, took up a position close to the mourning women. As each detachment arrived, the women, recognising their relatives, came forward and saluted them in the manner customary among Todas by falling at their feet, and placing first the right and then the left foot on their head. Shortly after the arrival of the band, signals were exchanged, by waving of putkūlis, between the assembled throng and a small detachment of men some distance off. A general move was made, and an *impromptu* procession formed, with men in front, band in the middle, and women bringing up the rear. A halt was made opposite a narrow gap leading into the shola; men and women sat apart as before; and the band walked round, discoursing unsweet music. A party of girls went off to bring fire from the spot just vacated for use in the coming ceremonial, but recourse was finally had to a box of matches lent by one of our party. At this stage we noticed a woman go up to the eldest son of the deceased, who was seated apart from the

[548] [533] [576]

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765 pause ensued, broken eventually by the arrival of the other funeral party, the men advancing in several lines, with arms linked, and crying out U, hah! U, hah, hah! in regular time. This party brought with it pieces of the skulls of a woman and two men, which were placed, wrapt in cloths, on the ground, saluted, and mourned over by the assembled multitude. At this [648] stage a small party of Kotas arrived, and took up their position on a neighbouring hill, waiting, vulture-like, for the carcase of the buffalo which was shortly to be slain. Several young men now went off across the 765 787 hill in search of buffaloes, and speedily re-appeared, driving five buffaloes before them with sticks. As soon as the beasts approached a swampy marsh at the foot of the hill on which the expectant crowd of men was gathered together, two young men of athletic build, throwing off their putkûlis, made a rush down the hill, and tried to seize one of the buffaloes by the horns, with the result that one of them was promptly thrown. The buffalo escaping, one of the remaining four was quickly caught by the horns, and, with arms interlocked, the men brought it down on its knees, amid a general scuffle. In spite of marked objection and strenuous resistance on the part of the animal—a barren cow—it was, by means of sticks freely applied, slowly dragged up the hill, preceded by the Kota band, and with a Toda youth pulling at its tail. Arrived at the open space between the kraals, the buffalo, by this time thoroughly exasperated, and with blood pouring from its nostrils, had a cloth put on its back, and was despatched by a blow on the poll with an axe deftly wielded by a young and muscular man. On this occasion no one was badly hurt by the sacrificial cow, though one man was seen washing his legs in the swamp after the preliminary struggle with

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764 was an elderly relative of the dead woman, who, while watching the ceremonial, was placidly engaged in the manufacture of a holly walking-stick with the aid of a glass scraper. The proceedings were watched on behalf [648] of Government by a forest guard, and a police constable who, with marked affectation, held his handkerchief to his nose throughout the ceremonial. The corpse was decorated with brass rings, and within the putkūli were stowed jaggery, a scroll of paper adorned with cowry shells, snuff and tobacco, cocoanuts, biscuits, various kinds of grain, ghī, honey, and a tin-framed looking-glass. A long purse, containing a silver Japanese yen and an Arcot rupee of the East India Company, was tied up in the putkūli close to the feet. These preliminaries concluded, the corpse was hoisted up, and swung three times over the now burning pyre, above which a mimic bier, made of slender twigs, was held. The body was then stripped of its jewelry, and a lock of hair cut off by the daughter- [765] in-law for preservation, together with a fragment of the skull. I was told that, when the corpse is swung over [775] the pyre, the dead person goes to amnodr (the world of the dead). In this connection, Dr. Rivers writes that "it would seem as if this ceremony of swinging the body over the fire was directly connected with the removal of the objects of value. The swinging over the fire would be symbolic of its destruction by fire; and this symbolic burning has the great advantage that the objects of value are not consumed, and are available for use another time. This is probably the real explanation of the ceremony, but it is not the explanation given by the Todas themselves. They say that long ago, about 400 years, a man [773] supposed to be dead was put on the funeral pyre, and, [763] revived by the heat, he was found to be alive, and was able to walk away from the funeral place. In consequence

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766 the head of the corpse, dug a hole in the ground with a cane, and asked a Kenna who was standing on the other side, "Puzhut, Kenna," * shall I throw the earth?—three times. To which the Kenna, answering, replied "Puzhut" —throw the earth—thrice. The Paiki then threw some earth three times over the corpse, and three times into the miniature kraal. It is suggested by Dr. Rivers that the circle was made to do duty for a buffalo pen, as the funeral was held at a place where there was no tu (pen), from the entrance of which earth could be dug up.

764. 533 Several examples of laments relating to the virtues and life of the deceased, which are sung or recited in the course of the funeral ceremonies, are given by Dr. Rivers. On the occasion of the reproduction of a lament in my phonograph, two young women were seen to be crying bitterly. The selection of the particular lament was [123] unfortunate, as it had been sung at their father's funeral. The reproduction of the recitation of a dead person's sins at a Badaga funeral quickly restored them to a state of cheerfulness.

648 764 782 The following petition to the Collector of the Nilgiris on the subject of buffalo sacrifice may be quoted as a sign of the times, when the Todas employ petition-writers to express their grievances:—

"According to our religious custom for the long period, we are bringing forward of our killing buffaloes without any irregular way. But, in last year, when the late Collector came to see the said place, by that he ordered to the Todas first not to keep the buffaloes without feeding in the kraal, and second he ordered to kill each for every day, and to clear away the buffaloes, and not to keep the buffaloes without food.

* "Puzhutkina—Shall I throw earth?" Rivers.

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We did our work according to his orders, and this excellent order was an ample one. Now this ———, a chief of the Todas, son of———, a deceased Toda, the above man joined with the moniagar of ——— village, joined together, and, dealing with bribes, now they arose against us, and doing this great troubles on us, and also, by this great trouble, one day Mr. ——— came for shooting shapes (snipe) by that side. By chance one grazing buffalo came to him, push him by his horns very forcely, and wounded him on his leg. By the help of another gentleman who came with him he escaped, or he would have die at the moment. Now the said moniagar and ——— joined together, want to finish the funeral to his late father on the 18th instant. For this purpose they are going to shut the buffaloes without food in the kraal on the 18th instant at 10 o'clock. They are going to kill the buffaloes on the 19th instant at 4 o'clock in the evening. But this is a great sin against god. But we beg your honour this way. That is, let them leave the buffaloes in the grazing place, and ask them to catch and kill them at the same moment. And also your honour cannot ordered them to keep them in the kraal without food. And, if they will desire to kill the buffaloes in this way, these buffaloes will come on us, and also on the other peoples one who, coming to see funs on those day, will kill them all by his anxious. And so we the Todas begs your honour to enquire them before the 18th, the said funeral ceremony commencing, and not to grant the above orders to them."

A Whit Monday at Paikara was given up to an exhibition of sports and games, whereof the most exciting and interesting was a burlesque representation of a Toda funeral by boys and girls. A Toda, who was

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Innerovya (name of buffalo).
Like this buffalo there is no other.
Parkûr (name of a Toda).
Like him there is no man.
The sun is shining. The wind is blowing.
Rain is coming. The trees are in flower.
Tears are falling. The nose is burning.
He is coming, holding up his umbrella.
He is coming, wearing a good body-cloth.
He is coming, wearing a good under-cloth.
He (the palol) is coming, wearing a black cloth.
He is coming, holding his walking-stick of palai wood.
I have a god. What is to become of me?
I am inclined to cry, my heart being heavy.
Oh, my child! Do not cry. It is still crying.
Thuree. Thuree. See. Be quiet.
A robust bull buffallo. Ach! Ach!
A big buffalo not intended for killing. Ach! Ach!
Is leading the cow buffalo. Ah! Ah!
Two or three men are driving it. Ah! Ah!

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Song in honour of the arrival of the Maharâni-Regent of Mysore at Ootacamund.

All we Todas go to her house, and dance before her.
She gives us fifteen rupees.
She comes near our women, and talks to them.
She gives cloths to us.
Next day we take milk, eight bottles in the morning, four in the evening.
Month by month she pays us for our milk.
She goes back to Mysore, and, when she goes, we stand in a row before her.

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[648] She gives us presents; cloths and three rupees.
The women cut their hair, and stand before her.

Marriage Song.

Boys and girls are singing.
Much money are they spending.
To the girl her father is giving five buffaloes.
The husband tells his wife that she must curl her hair.
If her hair is curled, all the people will rejoice.
The buffalo is slain, and now we must all dance.
Why are not more people here? More should come.
My buffalo is big, very big.
Go quickly and catch it.
The Todas are all there. They are standing in a row.
Who will run, and catch the buffalo first?
To him will a present of five rupees be given.
I will go and catch it first.
The Todas are all fighting.
The Todas are all feasting.
People give them rice.
The buffalo is coming. Two men run to catch it by the neck.
Ten men collect the buffaloes. They pen them in a kraal.
At one o'clock we take our food.
The buffalo is running, and I hit it on the back with a stick.
It swerves aside, but I drive it back to the path.
Night comes, and we all dance.
Next morning at ten o'clock we bring out the buffalo, and slay it.

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animals which have not yet reached the milch stage and which otherwise would unprofitably use up the community's scanty pasturage. It seems also that the Christians still retain some of their original feeling that wealth is to be measured by possession of cattle. They tend to acquire more and more head of cattle and because of the pressure on their own pasture area the superfluous beasts are kept with the tribe almost permanently or in alternation with unproductive animals. In these cases the man who provides pasturage gets the produce, milk and the resulting products. In all cases when cattle are pastured on tribal lands, it seems that it is the buffalo that is so treated; cows are kept at the Christian colonies, since the tribal Todas do not own cows.

The Todas live in economic symbiosis with the other aboriginal tribes of the Nilgiris, viz. the Kotas and the Kurumbas, and with the Badagas, who settled in the Nilgiris perhaps five centuries ago. The mechanism of the economic interchanges has not yet been described in detail,[6] but an outline of the Toda relations with the Kotas will be given here. The Kotas are blacksmiths and potters, and all the Toda needs in these departments are supplied by them, as well as music for the Toda funerals. In return the Kotas receive the carcasses of all Toda buffaloes that die or that are slaughtered at funerals, as well as certain other minor perquisites, such as cane for house-building, bamboo churning-sticks, and a certain amount of clarified butter. The interchanges are made between individuals, who are in a permanent and usually hereditary relationship to each other, referred to by the Todas as [keɪ], by the Kotas as [keɪ]. The relationship includes also the right of the Kota to obtain by purchase from his Toda opposite number such buffaloes and buffalo calves as he may need for his own economic purposes. In most cases one Toda has several Kotas who supply him, the relative numbers of the tribes and the Kotas' similar relationships with the Badagas making such an arrangement necessary. This economic relationship has broken down formally so far as the Christian Todas are concerned. But in spite of this, there is a tendency among the Christian Todas to retain the relationship with their hereditary Kota partners. They obtain their iron tools and pots from these Kotas and recompense them on a more strictly commercial basis than the original one. *E.g.* [kanfuɪsodj] retains such relationships with the Kota who was his father's partner and has in addition formed a new relationship with another Kota. He at least still uses the term [keɪ] in referring to his relationship with these two men, though my Kota linguistic informant was insistent that the Kota

[6] Reference may be made to Rivers, chap. 27. Dr. D. G. Mandelbaum has made more extensive notes on the subject and it is hoped that his account will soon appear.

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term [kel] should not be used of such relationships with the Christian Todas.

In religion there has of course been a complete break. None of the tribal religious practices could have been fitted into the Christian pattern and there has been no attempt to do so, but rather a revulsion on the part of the missionaries from anything that smacked of the old religion (note however Miss Ling's acceptance of the attitude towards the church-bell mentioned above). This has gone so far that the missionaries who succeeded Miss Ling frowned on dancing. In the tribe the dancing is a part of every social occasion. It is performed at religious ceremonies, but also at funerals, ceremonies when the ears are pierced, weddings, and almost all other occasions when a number of the people gather. Even the children dance in play in the style of their elders (girls have been seen dancing as well as boys, though Toda women never dance). Miss Ling, realizing that the dance is not religious, looked with an indulgent eye on the dancing of the converts and in fact rather encouraged it than otherwise, with its accompanying extempore songs, at weddings, christenings and other joyous occasions. The missionaries in charge during the interregnum when Miss Ling was in England, with lack of insight and sympathy, forbad dancing. The reason given was that such a typically tribal activity would produce a hankering for other tribal customs and consequent backsliding from Christianity; possibly also a Puritanical attitude to dancing in general played its unacknowledged part. The effect that I observed however was that when the missionary guests retired from the scene of festivity, wedding or the like, dancing took place, and there resulted a regrettably un-Christian fostering of deceit and dislike of the missionaries in charge. It is to be observed that the Christian festivities are almost always attended by tribal Todas of the neighborhood and also by others from a greater distance who are related to the principals in Christian weddings and christenings. They are participants in the feasting and the males among them join with alacrity in the dancing.

The song-words that are composed during the dancing, as well as all other songs in the Toda language that are composed by the Christians, are of the tribal type and use the normal Toda technique of word and tune.[1] As most Toda songs are extempore and topical, so are the songs made by the Christians. There is an attempt to enlarge the verbal technique to embrace specifically Christian concepts and considering the rigidity of the conventions there are signs that the attempt will be suc-

[1] See my paper *The Songs of the Todas*, Proceedings American Philosophical Society 77. 343-393.

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This incident, without the missionary influence, is typical of tribal matrimonial disputes; in the tribe there would have been no objection to the cross-cousin marriage taking place as a formality to be succeeded when the parties grew up by a *de facto* non-cross-cousin marriage with a fine known as [ter] paid as it was in this incident. The formal marriage was barred by Christian custom, but the succeeding events follow the tribal pattern of [ter]. It is noteworthy also that a respected man of the tribe was called in to adjudicate; this seems to be usual with the Christian community even in cases where disputes are not so closely bound up with social customs.

We have seen then that in spite of the outward break with tribal culture some elements of this culture have been retained by the Christian community. The tribal pastures are still resorted to by the Christians when there is too much pressure on their own pasturage, and in some cases at least hereditary economic partnerships with Kotas are kept up and even new ones formed. Economic relationships with the Badagas were of a different nature, consisting mainly of a sort of rent paid by the Badagas to the Todas; these relations have disappeared completely with reference to the Christian Todas. So also, so far as I know, the relations with the Kurumbas, who figure in the economic symbiosis chiefly as sorcerers, one of whom is paid by each Toda, Kota, and Badaga village to keep all other Kurumba sorcerers at bay (a crude insurance system known elsewhere in India against both castes of thieves and castes who are reputed to be sorcerers). Converts retain their Toda names, even though in the case of men these have tribal religious significance. The children born within the community, however, in general have no Toda names; when such names are given those of females follow the tribal pattern with its frequent poetic associations and those of males are in a measure assimilated to the female pattern with at least one quasi-suffixal element retained from the male pattern. The matrimonial incident recorded in the last paragraphs shows that there is an almost complete carry-over of tribal patterns in this sphere. Finally, a most important element is the retention of the tribal dance and song-technique. In the latter we have a verbalization of thought and emotion expressed in the old familiar technique, with fairly successful attempts to adjust the rigid conventions to the new patterns, resulting in one case in a highly poetical expression of the Christian attitude to God in his role of creator and being to be worshipped by all creatures.

The Christian Todas can hardly be said to have reached a perfectly integrated state. It is interesting to speculate on what their future condition will be, though very unprofitable. The adult members of the

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794 184 563 177 [867] community are still in many respects Todas. The new generation however is growing up without intimate knowledge of things Toda and in most cases without knowledge of the Toda language, since there is an admixture of Tamilians in the community and all formal instruction is carried on in the Tamil language. New converts may and probably will be made who will introduce fresh Toda influences. But it is to be expected that the community will in time become so Tamilized that those born into it will hardly differ at all from other Tamil Christians and fresh converts will find few Toda traditions there to strengthen.

794 184 564 783 It still remains to discuss the attitude of the tribe towards the Christian community. Theoretically since the Christians have "broken caste," have given up the tribal religious and social rites and have adopted some habits which are repugnant to the tribe, *e.g.*, meat-eating,[15] there should be an absolute break in the relations between the two communities. The chief marks of outcasting in most Hindu communities are refusal of the caste to intermarry with the outcastes and also to interdine. The latter is based on the conception of pollution; a person who is not of the caste and who does not observe the customs of the caste, especially in such intimate matters as preparation and consumption of food, will produce equal uncleanness in the caste-members, necessitating elaborate purifications. The Todas are not in a strict sense a caste, though conceptions of purity and pollution are prominent in their culture. They will not, for example, go into a Kota village since the Kotas are unclean by occupation (blacksmithing and pottery) and by eating habits (meat and even carrion are regularly eaten); all transactions with Kotas at a Kota village must be carried on at the green outside the Kota village. Nor is a Kota allowed to enter a Toda village. Interdining between Todas and Kotas is non-existent. The Badagas however do not suffer from the restrictions that the Kotas do. Badagas may enter Toda villages and those in certain formalized relations with the Todas are invited to Toda ceremonies and eat with them at the feasts that follow. The European is on about the same footing as the Badaga, though he eats meat. I have been invited on several occasions to take part in the feast following a Toda ceremony and my sitting in the row of Toda feasters did not inconvenience them as that of a Kota would. The Toda Christian also is invited to eat at such feasts and does eat. He is not however allowed into a Toda dairy, any more than any other profane person is, nor is he allowed into a Toda house, in this respect being like the European. The European may enter the

564 648 186 [574] [184] [794]

[15] See *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after*, p. 119, for the somewhat equivocal attitude of the tribe to this habit.

[113]

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for short or longer periods has however been passed and with changed political conditions it is evident that the European population will suffer a decline. Well-to-do Indians have also felt the attractions, climatic or other, of the Nilgiri hill-stations; whether the climax of their migration has been reached it is difficult to say. The specific differences between the influences of Rivers' time and those of today are to be seen, not so much in the influence exerted on the hill cultures by the Europeans, as in the ever-increasing numbers of Indians from the plains, mostly low-caste Tamil and Kannada speakers who are agricultural laborers, but also Mohammedans from various areas, including Pashto-speaking money-lenders from the far north, as well as traders, especially Marwaris from the Bombay Presidency and Chettis from the Tamil area.

It will throw some light on the nature of Toda culture if an attempt is made to assess the effects of these various influences on the life of the Todas, insofar as there has been an effect. A general examination of changes that have taken place in Toda culture since Rivers' time will also be of value, both in itself and as providing evidence by which some of Rivers' hypotheses may be evaluated. The treatment may be divided into three major sections—economic life, social organization, and religion. At some points a comparison may usefully be made between the state of Toda culture at the present time and the state of the Kota and the Badaga cultures in the corresponding departments.

The economic life of the Todas is that department which has felt the impact of outside influences most strongly. The basis on which the economic life is founded is the herds of buffaloes. A great part of the diet of the tribe is made up of milk, buttermilk, and ghee. In this respect incidentally they offer a marked contrast to most of the south Indian communities, among whom cattle-products are too frequently neglected as a source of nourishing food. Besides this, the Todas require grain-food and of these rice and millet are the chief. In the days before the hills were opened up, grain was acquired from the Badagas chiefly, and the method, still followed, was for a Toda to go to the Badaga village with which his sib was connected and levy contributions, so much from each house. Rice seems to have been obtained

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from the plains on the Tamilian side of the hills, either directly or through Kurumba middlemen. The details of these last transactions have been almost entirely forgotten through disuse. At the present time rice is obtained in the bazaars of Ootacamund and probably Kotagiri, chiefly from the Chettis, who also supply all the cloaks worn by the Todas and the waistcloths put on corpses at funerals, as well as many other articles. These articles are paid for chiefly with milk and ghee. While the milk of sacred buffaloes is too sacred to be thus profaned, the sanctity has been removed by the time it reaches the ghee-stage, and ghee may be sold, irrespective of its origin. The transactions with the Chettis are not allowed by them to be profitable to the Todas. If a Toda has only a few buffaloes, he is always in debt. And even a Toda with a fair number of buffaloes will usually be in debt. This starts during the dry season when the buffaloes give little milk and ghee is scarce. The Chetti is usually asked for credit and once this begins, the Toda can seldom free himself even if he suffers no accidental misfortune such as the death of a buffalo. The complicated transfers of buffaloes at ceremonies undoubtedly play a large part in the impoverishment of many Todas, as well as the slaughter of buffaloes at funerals, and certain ceremonies involving feasts complete the process. Under this system of traffic in the bazaar the Todas as a tribe are never free of debt. When the Toda Amelioration Scheme was initiated some years ago under the aegis of Government, it was considered that the first step to be taken was the paying off of the Todas' debts and this was done by Government. The Scheme was unsuccessful (see below) and the debts have grown again.

The Badagas, as has been said above, still continue their contributions to the Todas, while the Todas supply them with a small amount of produce and make various other small returns. The economic interchange between Kotas and Todas continues. This takes the form chiefly of a supply of tools and pots and the playing of music at funerals by the Kotas, and in return they acquire the carcasses and hides of the buffaloes slaughtered at funerals, a certain amount of ghee, and occasionally other articles. In both cases it seems probable that the Todas are the gainers in the total of transactions. The continuance of these interchanges

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is remarkable when we consider that the interchange between Badagas and Kotas has broken down almost entirely. This latter break-down however is primarily due to religious changes in the Badaga community. One of the main services supplied by Kotas to Badagas was music at funerals. The majority of the Badagas have reformed their customs in this respect and no longer requiring music and having a convenient source of tools and pots at hand in the bazaars, this section of the Badagas has repudiated with some heat all connexions with the Kota community, especially as the Kotas by expanding their agricultural activities and aspiring to a higher status in the hierarchy of the tribes of the hills have come into quarrelsome conflict with the Badagas. That the Todas have not broken off relations with the Kotas is probably due primarily to their adherence to the old system of acquiring tools and pots and to their desire for the Kota music at funerals. Even this latter item may arise in the future as a source of conflict, since the anti-music tendency of the Badagas has begun to infect the Kotas, or at least one of their most articulate reformers. He is however at present an object of great suspicion to the conservative members of the Kota community and it is improbable that the Todas will be deprived of their funeral music until a fairly remote future. The two tribes do not come into economic conflict, as do the Badagas and the Kotas, nor do Kota caste-aspirations bring them into conflict with the Todas, who as the highest ranking aboriginal community of the hills are immeasurably above the Kotas in their own estimation and look upon the Kota aspirations, if they pay any attention to them at all, with a lordly disdain. My Kota informant, the above-mentioned reformer, has also observed to me rather pathetically that the Todas are a friendly people while the Kotas are quarrelsome, and it is probable that this lordly condescension of the Todas keeps the Kotas on friendly terms with them, while the pushing, *nouveau riche* attitude easily observed in the Badagas antagonises a caste like the Kotas who having a relatively low position yet do not feel themselves much inferior to the Badagas and certainly will not openly admit any inferiority.

The land basis of Toda economic life is pasturage for the herds. This has been affected adversely by the influx of immi-

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the impression is gained that if Government did not keep a close watch on Toda land, either from a concern for Toda welfare or from a desire to preserve the amenities of the Nilgiris, and prevent the free play of economic pressure, the pastures would soon all be alienated, or at any rate to such an extent that the economic life of the Todas would be severely prejudiced. Toda economic life is to this important extent artificially hedged off from the interference of outside influences and preserved from total disruption. Sir Athelstane Baines' remark that the Todas are "stall-fed aborigines" is in this respect entirely justified.[1]

The Toda Amelioration Scheme was mentioned above in connexion with the payment of Toda debts. The other chief feature of the plan was to induce the Todas to grow potatoes and to work this agricultural enterprise and the sale of their ghee through two cooperative societies. The advantages of the Scheme appealed to a number of the chief men, and some of the superficial benefits made a remarkable appeal to less responsible Todas as a method of getting something for nothing. The scheme broke down on its really vulnerable point. The Todas are pastoralists with no tradition of agriculture and the continuous back-breaking labor it demands, and the attempt to make agriculturalists of them while their own pastoral occupation was still in full working order could not with any confidence have been expected to succeed.[2] Those few who personally engaged themselves in the work found that it went so against their habits that two years of it were more than enough. The majority merely hired outsiders to do the manual labor for them, or sold the seed-potatoes and tools that were advanced to them by the societies. No trace of the Scheme now remains.

Casual employment as beaters for English sportsmen brings in a small, irregular income to a few Todas. The Maharaja of Mysore each year engages fifteen men of the tribe to act as an ornamental bodyguard at his palace in Ootacamund. Some few

[1] Sir Athelstane Baines *Ethnography (Castes and Tribes.)* [Grundriss der Indo-arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde II. 5], 125.

[2] See also the Census officer in 1931 (reference in note 1) for the same judgment on the scheme.

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648 434 Todas who have no buffaloes and no means of making a sufficient living within the tribal structure find employment on tea-estates. Others who live near Ootacamund make their living by tending cattle, an occupation congenial to pastoralists. In most cases they live in their own villages and do not find their participation in the communal life of the tribe too much restricted by their extra-tribal economic activities.

595 114 In matters of social oraganization no change of any great importance can be found since Rivers made his investigations. The marriage system seems to work quite as it did then, fraternal polyandry modified by polygyny. Rivers' prediction that in time monogamy would prevail is not yet fulfilled. Though it is impossible without a statistical study of Rivers' genealogies brought up to date to make any valid statement concerning the decrease or otherwise of polyandry, I have got no information that would lead me to believe that the institution is a dying one.

588 616 In conjunction with the normal marriage system, in which each of the moieties of the tribe is endogamous, there is another institution, whereby a man from one moiety lives with a woman of the other moiety, each member of the couple having as well his or her legal spouse. Any children resulting from this union are reckoned for all purposes as children of the woman by her husband within her own moiety. In fact, if a man resembles closely his [578] mother's lover (called moxθo:tjfojo:ɻ), this fact may be thrown up to him as an insult ("son of so-and-so [the mother's lover]!"). 582 588 616 198 Rivers' described (p. 534) how the headman kuᵐ:ɻjaɻf made an innovation by taking a wife from the moiety not his own, or rather by taking a woman, as he was entitled to do, by the moxθo:tjfoj institution but insisting on giving compensation for her to her husband as if she were a woman of his own moiety, i. e. by treating her as his legal wife. This innovation made a great impact on Toda consciousness and is still spoken of and referred to in any songs about kuᵐ:ɻjaɻf or the children of this union. The example was followed in kuᵐ:ɻjaɻf's lifetime by several men, but all these unions have been dissolved by death, and since kuᵐ:ɻjaɻf's death no fresh example has been allowed by the chief men of the tribe. The innovation, which if continued would probably

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887 764 554 526 [518] old ones this opportunity and sometimes catch the old men's assigned animals before the latter can reach them. Old men retaliate sometimes by stepping in when the young men are unable to control a buffalo that has been caught. In the latter case the old man is inclined to boast inordinately of his prowess. [533] Great speed in running and skill in catching buffaloes is celebrated in the songs. Adventitious rewards are occasionally 764 554 526 given to the winner in the race for the buffaloes. E. g. about twenty years ago at the funeral of kanmṛ (Rivers' genealogical table 63), kuṃṛjaṛ, the headman of the tribe, offered a fine cloak to the winner in the race. It was won by kɛ:nodɛ (21), who still dwells on this proof of his former prowess. If this interest needs any buttressing, it has recently been provided by the Ootacmund 648 Hunt, which initiated in 1936 at the point-to-point race meet a 526 cross-country running race for Todas. In that year and in 1937 the race was of about a mile and a quarter over rolling downs. It was won both years in remarkably fast time by a young man, [789] who was said at the time to have gone to the Kurumbas beforehand for charms to help him to win. This innovation, which will no doubt last as long as the Ootacamund Hunt, merely adds another small item to a highly-developed interest and fits well into the Toda pattern.

291 177 Toda men's costume has been affected to a slight extent by the influence of the immigrant plainspeople. I have already described the proper Toda clothes in my paper *Toda Garments and Embroidery*. In addition to these most men nowadays wear a shirt under the cloak in the manner made familiar to them by the Indians in the bazaar. A turban of bright-colored cloth or silk [292] is also affected, by headmen usually and by all others who can afford it for festal occasions. That this is a borrowing is easily seen from the clumsy efforts that the men make in tying the turban and from the lack of any uniform style in the result. Some young men also wear a bright-colored neckerchief knotted in front as a fairly regular part of their costume; this is a very [178] recent innovation and seems to be an independent invention. [784] None of these new garments may be worn when the men go [234] inside the walls surrounding the dairies. The waistcloth, though it seems to be an innovation of about a century ago, is worn near

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dancing will add somewhat to the treatment. Dancing takes place at weddings[16] and at such religious ceremonies as the giving of salt to the buffaloes (up-otjt), the rethatching of a dairy (poj-ful-fæ ist), and the prayer-ceremony at a chief mund[17] (mod-furtjt), as well as at such unusual social occasions as the reception of an important European visitor, the celebration under the patronage of the Governor of Madras by all the inhabitants of the Nilgiris of a Jubilee in the British royal family, large Badaga ceremonies which many Todas attend, etc. At such dances men from both moieties participate in the same dance. Men who may not dance are those who are mourning a death. (a) If the first funeral has not yet taken place, dancing is prohibited to those who are mourning the death of a man of the same patrilineal sib, of the same matrilineal sib, or of one who is called pojo:l, i.e., wife's father or brother, wife's father's brother, and conversely, daughter's husband, sister's husband, brother's daughter's husband (cf. p. 165). If the dead person is a woman, the prohibition affects, besides members of her matrilineal sib and her pojo:l, only those members of her father's patrilineal sib who belong to her immediate family. (b) If the first funeral has taken place, but mourning still obtains until the second funeral shall have been performed, no one may dance who is related to the dead person by relationship within the matrilineal sib, by the closest relationship within the patrilineal sib, i.e. by membership in the immediate family of the dead person, or by pojo:l relationship as in (a). In both (a) and (b), when a man is dead, dancing is prohibited for the husband and sons of the woman in the opposite moiety with whom he has had sexual relations of the "lover-mistress" type;[18] when a woman is dead, dancing is prohibited for the man in the opposite moiety with whom she has had "lover-mistress" relations, and for his sons.

Dancing also takes place at funerals, whether first or second. Normally only men are allowed to dance who belong to the other moiety than the one to which the dead person belonged. Here again the prohibitions indicated in the preceding paragraph hold with regard to people in the "lover-mistress" relationship to the dead person. And, of course, no person may dance who is mourning any other death. The rule permitting only men of the opposite moiety to dance is sometimes broken. At the funeral of some relatively unimportant person there may not be enough men of the opposite moiety present to dance, or at the funeral of a member of the ŋŋkitj, nirj, and purpoir sibs of the tɔrθas moiety, since the munds of these sibs are far from any munds of the tööθij moiety. In this case members of the same moiety as the dead person will be permitted to dance, but no one who is mourning the dead

[16] There is no dancing at the ceremony when a man gives the toy bow and arrow to his wife during her pregnancy to legitimize the child (pæs-ŋtjt). At a ceremony of this kind which I attended with Mr C. P. Skrine, Agent of the Madras States and author of *Chinese Central Asia* (London, 1926), the men danced so that he should be able to see how it is done. The words composed during the dance were about myself and the ceremony was mentioned only as one in a list of ceremonies that I had seen.

[17] A mund (Toda word mod) is, throughout this paper, a dairy institution plus a dwelling place. The significance of "chief mund" (ist-dwd-mod) as opposed to other munds (mɔs-mod) has been explained in my paper *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years After* (Annals, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol. 19, pp. 101–21, 1938), pp. 113–15.

[18] See reference in note 9 above.

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feet high range of peaks that constitutes the culminating point reached from north to south by the Western Ghats, is visible in clear weather through a distinctly blue haze.

From the capital of the district, Ootacamund ("One-Stone House" in Tamil, shortened to *Ooty* by British residents), seat of the Government Administrator called the Collector, asphalted motor roads lead out in all directions over the grass-covered downs, which are interspaced here and there in the shallow parts with *sholas* or woods of short trees and bushes. The scenery is very beautiful, and the climate is excellent. Europeans from Madras city and from elsewhere, ever since the beginning of the 18th century, have made use of the station, the highest in India, from which to escape the insalubrious damp heat of the lowlands.

It is here on this green plateau that the Todas live. In their own language, they call themselves *Olkh*,[1] "men", their other name by which all outsiders know them, Toda, being from the Badaga language, *Toda-ma*, "chief". Their houses, *arsh*, which are of a particular kind, made of slit bamboo and planks and thatched, in the shape of Nissen huts, have no chimney and no windows worth mentioning, while the door is barely two feet high, obliging those who enter through it to crawl in on all fours. These dwellings are grouped in small numbers, never more than four or five at a time, forming *munds* (in Toda *mad*), and are scattered all over the hills, near sholas, and often very far away from each other. This spread appearance is apt to be deceptive to begin with, as it would seem that each "village" is practically independent, and leads a life of its own. Actually this is not the case, since, regardless of the distance which separates various munds from each other (often twenty miles and more), tribal divisions make it perfectly clear which hamlets belong together and which do not.

The people have a fine physical appearance. They are, on an average, generally taller than most Indians, the tallest Toda being something like six foot six. The men are profusely bearded, and wear their hair

[1] Romanization of Toda here will be in accordance with the following personal transcription:

a = hat	ee = meet	ai = bite	l = lot	s = soon	v = vat
a = hut	f = fun	j = French	m = me	t = top	w = won
b = best	g = gone	dj = job	n = no	th = Greek theta	y = yoke
d = do	gh = Greek gamma	sh = she	o = hot	z = zero	z = simply tonic
dh = Greek delta	ng = ring	tch = chap	ö = word	u = blue	
e = met	h = aspirate	k = kit	oi = boy	ù = cook	
ei = date	i = hit	kh = Greek chi	p = pot	oo = moon	
			r = rot	ü = French	

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No.	Name of *mads* (in Toda)	Men	Women	Children	Total
21	Patdhue	4	4	0	8
22	Karie	7	5	4	16
23	Norsh	11	13	4	28
24	Tavatkhiur	5	4	3	12
25	Kiudi	3	2	0	5
26	Kiur	2	2	4	8
27	Molkursh	5	3	0	8
28	Tivalkun	3	2	0	5
29	Pudmad	4	3	8	15
30	Artalkh	13	9	6	28
31	Tarar	13	10	8	31
32	Mortkiar	3	5	3	11
33	Konorj	4	3	3	10
34	Nirkh	3	2	4	9
35	Inkit	6	7	3	16
36	Kwordhoni	13	8	2	23
37	Pörgarsh	6	6	1	13
	Total	218	176	95 *	488

* Of which 44 were boys and 50 girls.

In 1952, the Toda population had further dropped to the all time low figure of 475, but at the time of writing (1954), it seems that in the last two years there have been 58 births and 21 deaths only, which now makes the total number of the tribe 512 – in marked progress away from the tragic trend towards extinction, which has been so pronounced since the days of Rivers. This author mentions a census taken in 1901 (*The Todas*, pp. 469 & 473), but since that date, no reliable figures are available. That was the reason for which I decided to make my own count of the Toda population. Kanvarsathi and I went round to every single *mad* in turn, and apart from recording persons present, obtained reliable information about those who were absent at the time of our visits.

Apart from Europeans, Indian Maharajas and their staffs, domestic servants and shopkeepers who have come up from the plains with them, and the Mysorean cultivators whose numbers are growing continually, other inhabitants of the Nilgiris, who are indigenous, like the Todas, are the Badagas, Kotas, Kurumbas, and Irulas. Their relations with the original Nilgiri tribe, who look upon themselves as the "Lords of the Soil", believing as they do, that they were created there by their

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101 gods, are very close indeed; so close in fact that to know them really
648 well it would be necessary to make a special study of them from the
121 point of view of each of the five communities in turn. As others who have worked solely on the Todas before me, I am, however, only acquainted with these relations from the Toda viewpoint, and consequently can only briefly account for them here as described to me from that angle.

648 Of the four, the Badaga community is the largest. It is said, too, that it is the latest to have arrived in the Blue Mountains, but even so, this must have been quite a long time ago, as there are Portuguese descriptions of it going back for more than three centuries. The Todas [186] consider the Badagas as practically their equals, and their name for them is *Mav*. They depend on them for much of their livelihood, as [439] they are the agriculturists who supply them with grain, and all relations with the outer world are conducted to a large extent for the Todas through their intermediary. They pay a specified grain tribute called *kur* (Rivers' *gudu*) to the Todas, and the priests of the latter's most important temples may eat only Badaga grain (which includes rice) and none other. Furthermore a Badaga from the village of Tuneri is by right a member of the Toda tribal council, when it decides questions of inter-tribal importance, and at certain ceremonies in the principal temples, a Badaga, known as a *tikelvmav* has to be in attendance.

[186] The Kotas, called *Kuv* by the Todas, are looked down upon by them
[439] and considered low-caste. They are the artisans who supply metalware and pottery to their neighbours, and, as is often the case with smiths in India, also music at festive occasions. They are indispensable at Toda funerals, where they have very distinct duties such as providing a band, giving cloth, grain, ceremonial bows and arrows, money etc. for the proper disposal of the corpse, besides taking away the sacrificed buffaloes which they eat.

The Kurumbas and Irulas are slight, dwarf-like aborigines who inhabit the forest-clad, malarial southern and western slopes of the Nil- [186] giris. They are known respectively as *Kurub* and *Eri* by the Todas, who fear them greatly as sorcerers and magicians. It is on them, and [439] principally the Kurumbas, that the tribe is dependent for its supply of bamboo vessels, of a certain long pole, the *tari*, used at funerals, and more especially of medicine, which appellation includes poison. The Todas make habitual use of the latter when they want to fight each other in personal or inter-clan feuds. In Toda mythology, the two last named of their neighbours as well as the Kotas, but not the Badagas, are mentioned.

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776 Then come two important demi-gods: a) *Kwotèn*, a man-god whose fabulous life is closely associated with one of the Toda clans (that of Pan); Rivers believed him to have been an outstanding Toda personality who was possibly posthumously deified. b) *Kwoto*, another man-god; he is closely associated with the clan of Melgarsh; among the legendary feats which he is reputed to have accomplished is that of tying down the sun between two mountains and of taking it to drink at a stream every day, in order to prove to the gods, who had challenged him, that he possessed supernatural powers.

197 The language spoken by the Todas is a Dravidian dialect. According to Emeneau, it is more akin to Canarese (Kanada) than to Tamil, although it cannot be said to be a very close relative of the former either. All Todas are, anyhow, bilingual, and very often even tri-
191 lingual, conversing freely in Badaga with their neighbours and in Tamil with visitors from the plains. As they have no script of their own,
212 when they occasionally want to write something (such as commemora-
177 tive inscriptions on temple doors) they make use of Tamil characters. I have never seen them use Roman letters, but I have been told (by Miss C. F. Ling for instance) that although not habitual, this is sometimes also done.

234 The economy of the Todas is a pastoral one, large herds of great
433 horned buffaloes, which do not resemble those of the plains, being kept for their milk and milk products. Many of these animals are
[778] quite ordinary (*putir*) but the great majority of them are pedigree cattle of a sacred nature (*postir*), their ancestry being calculated through the cows. They are believed to have been given to the tribe by the gods. They are grouped in four principal categories, each graded hierarchically. Thus the lowest category is that of the *wursulir*, then come the
[778] *nodrovair* and the *Kugvalir*, and finally, the highest and most sacred of all, the *tiir*.

[648] Like other pastoral people, the Todas consider it degrading to take
[24] to agriculture, and repeated attempts by the Indian Government to induce them to till the soil have miserably failed. When given a field
[427] to cultivate, they usually let it out to a Badaga for a nominal sum, preferring to carry on with their animal husbandry and its semi-nomadic form of life, a tradition deeply ingrained in them and to which they are greatly attached. Most of the milk, butter and buttermilk
[439] produced by the tribe is consumed by its members, but a certain amount is sold in the local market, and the money thus earned made use of to
433 buy other foods and everyday commodities. On the whole, the Toda
511

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642 622 648 [614] With the arrival of the British in the Nilgiris, Mr. Sullivan, the first European official, appointed a headman known by the Badaga name of *monegar*. He was drawn from the Kuur clan of the Teivilkh moiety, without any consideration for the social organization of the tribe as a whole, and made responsible for the assessment of the sum which the Todas pay to the Government for their grazing rights, etc. The tribe looks upon this office, filled during my stay in the Blue Mountains first by Piliar (52) in 1939 and then by Pilkhliud in 1949, as that of a servant, entrusted with the task of acting as a go-between with the Indian authorities, and has no consideration for it at all.

642 623 692 [614] There exists a supreme Toda council known as the *noim*, and smaller *noims* are also in existence within each clan. These decide the inner affairs of the *modols*, while the great *noim* deals with the affairs of the whole tribe. Its members are recruited from only four Toda clans, the three Tardharsh ones of Karsh, Norsh and Tarar, and the chief Teivilkh one of Kuur. And even then, they must come from sub-lineages within each of these clans. Its duties consist in the settlement of civil disputes arising between individuals, families and clans, and it also has wide functions in connection with Toda ceremonial. [684] [648] Its most important business appears to be the settling of disputes arising out of the custom of stealing wives from other men, and of deciding the amount of compensation due to the injured party. When affairs involving relations with the Badagas are in question, it is this assembly which a fifth member joins, a Badaga from the village of Tuneri, as has already been mentioned earlier (see p. 246).

2. CUSTOMS AND INDIVIDUAL WAYS WITH A BEARING ON A STUDY OF POLYANDRY

553 858 Children among the Todas receive their names very early. But whereas this is done very simply in the case of girls – the grandmother, either paternal or maternal, of the oldest woman of the *mad* giving the little girl her name – it is done with great ceremony in the case of boys.

553 852 302 [604] In the *per vasthpimi* ceremony, which takes place when the child is three months old, at the time of uncovering its face (see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 331), the boy is taken by his father to where the buffaloes stand at the *mad*, and the hair of his head shaved off, but only across the middle from ear to ear leaving it long behind and in a fringe over the forehead. The father does the shaving, but it is the maternal uncle, the *mun*, who gives the name. He also promises to give a calf to the

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of what he calls "group marriage" tending more and more to look upon one of the women as his own (see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 519).

From what has been stated above, it will be clear that, because of many rules and regulations about whom one may marry and whom one may not, Todas, apart from child-marriage, find it difficult, when adult, to get themselves a wife. The number of women is very limited, and many of them are ineligible because of social barriers, so that not a few men would remain single were it not for the time-honoured custom of *terershti*, or that of the transfer of wives. Rivers describes the latter as a sort of peaceful pact which is negotiated at a meeting between the husband or husbands of a woman and a man or a group of men who wish to take her to wife, compensation (*ter*) to be paid to the losing party in buffaloes being decided first, (*terershti*, "compensation he decides", see Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 523).

But when I was in the Nilgiris, transference of wives never took place except forcibly, and it was up to the *noim*, after the abduction had taken place, to fix the amount of animals that should be paid to the aggrieved party in compensation. Nowadays, no longer content with taking the case to the *noim*, some Todas are appealing direct to the Government for help, requesting even that the latter intervene actively to put an end to a custom which, with time, and no doubt because of outside influence, is becoming increasingly distasteful to them. So long, however, as there exists so great a disproportion between the numbers of men to women, and tribal regulations concerning moiety endogamy and clan exogamy are so strictly observed, there seems to be no other solution for the men to the dearth of wives than continually to be taking them from one another, while paying due compensation, so that all of them have at least a time during which they are married.

Some Toda women whom I have met have been wives to no less than seven men or groups of men, remaining with these for a year or so before being carried off again by another or others. Among them have been those who have taken pride in recounting how many buffaloes were paid in compensation for them, as in the eyes of the men, their prestige seems to be in direct proportion to the importance of the figure. Women carried off leave their children if the latter are big enough, but take them with them to their new home if they are small. When they grow up, they will return to the clan of their official father.

Of course, what makes it easier for Toda men to accept polyandry and the stealing of each other's wives, is that fatherhood of the off-

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had both received pieces of cloth from the cicisbeo of their wife.

So ingrained in Toda customs is the *mokhthoditi* institution that somebody who died without having either a *mokhthodvaiol* or a *sedvaitazmokh* would have to have one appointed after death so as to fill the place reserved for that person at the funeral rites. For cicisbei have an important function to fulfil on this occasion, and no ceremony would be complete without it. It is significant that a brother of the woman's husband is preferred in the case of such a posthumous appointment.

At the cremation of Ling Mish (23, called after Miss C. F. Ling!), a Tarar woman married to a man of the Norsh *modol*, on the 27th July, 1939, I saw her cicisbeo, a Teivilkh, come forward at the moment when her body had been prepared to be laid on the pyre, and insert with his left hand some limes, three handfuls of the grain which the Todas call *patcherski* (samai), jaggery, a piece of the dark *än* cloth, and the strings (*penor*) of his own *kuvn*, into the pocket of the deceased's *putkuli*. I was told that had she not had a lover, another man of the Teivilkh moiety would have been chosen to carry out this last rite it being essential to do so. Rivers says that the *mokhthodvaiol* should go to the funeral with his ring on the ring-finger of his left hand. He should make the *kalmelpudithi* salutation to the woman's father before the buffaloes have been caught, and afterwards insert the symbolic objects into his dead mistress's garment with his left hand – as if to mark that his relations with her were really *de la main gauche*. In the case of a man dying, exactly the same rites will be carried out by his *sedvaitazmokh*, except that she will not make obeisance to the man's father; her brothers will in her stead (see *The Todas*, p. 366).

The Todas always make a point of saying that they may not have any sexual relations, even clandestine, with non-Todas, and we have seen that a divorce from a woman can be sought for if she has been convicted of such an offence. It is, I was told, a particularly heinous crime for a Toda woman to have intercourse with someone not belonging to the tribe. In this way, we are led to believe, Toda racial stock has been kept "pure" throughout the centuries, and I have even heard it said by Indian physical anthropologists that the tribe is of a degenerate physical type, because there is too much intermarriage, and "the genes do not circulate enough".

And yet it seems that with the Muduga tribe of the Walluvanad taluk in Malabar there exists a definite institutionalised sexual relation based upon the hereditary friendship of some Todas with a few leading

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families among the Mudugas. This has been clearly brought out by Professor C. von Fürer-Haimendorf in a short note published on his findings in Malabar (see *Man*, Vol. LIV, Feb. 1954, art. 24).

According to what he writes, those village headman at Pottikal who have a traditional friendship with certain Todas receive the latter at least once a year in their homes for several days. Each of them vacates his house completely, leaving, however, his wife to look after the Todas (usually brothers) who then assume the role of "husbands" towards her. In return, when the Muduga headman pays back the visit at the *mad* of his same Toda friends, he has access to their wife and sleeps with her as long as he is staying in the Nilgiris. Neither of the parties apparently believes that conception can result from such passing intercourse, which perhaps accounts for the tolerance shown by the Todas towards their women's sexual relations with a stranger. I feel sure, however, that it would be impossible to discover anything about this practice from the Nilgiri tribe itself, and it is certainly due to the fact that Professor von Fürer-Haimendorf was working among the Mudugas and not among the Todas that he was able to hear of its existence at all.

I enquired repeatedly about homosexuality during my two visits to the Todas, and kept my eyes open for any evidence of it. My questions on this subject seemed to provoke merriment, and the men would usually laugh when interrogated about it. As far as I could make out, there does not seem to be much proclivity towards it, either among men or women. While with the latter I could record no case at all, even from hearsay, with the other sex at least there seemed to be some reason to believe that Tilipa (12) of the Karsh *modol* was inclined that way. A pleasant old man, with long curls and an effeminate manner, he was reputed to have been caught a number of times with men younger than himself, to the intense amusement of the tribe, and to have been fined by the *noim* for this misdemeanour. He was married to a masterful, viriloid woman, who bossed him about in no uncertain manner, and from whom he had "had" four fine sons. It was whispered, however, that he was only the legal father, having given the bow and arrow for them, while another was their physiological sire.

Neurosis was a question very difficult to go into, working as I was through an interpreter, and having no means by which to delve very deeply into the individual psyche. Here too, appearances seem to show that there was little of it about, the complex social organisation of the tribe affording plenty of outlets for the feelings, emotions and drives of ill-adapted persons. Pangur, son of Piliar (52), however, was a case

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578 674 worse was, to begin with, ever brought to my notice by my informants.

When, however, I delved more deeply into the matter, I soon found out that appearances were very deceptive, and that under a peaceful exterior, many serious acts of aggression had taken and were still taking [754] place. Personal feuds of intense hatred and jealousy, especially among the older men, seemed to be the reasons for what were not just empty accusations of witchcraft, but unmistakably crimes, and I gathered so much evidence of this that I have come to think that there are very [682] few influential old Todas who die a natural death. They are more usually done away with by their rivals, through the time-honoured [648] method of having them poisoned by the Kurumbas, mainly, I think, with *datura*.

578 682 754 115 662 Thus Karnoz of Melgarsh (45), whom I got to know very well, was greatly feared as a *pili* (sorcerer). When I returned to the Nilgiris for the second time in 1949, I found that he had reputedly done away with Ujar (48), my old and trusted informant, his uncle and chief of the Melgarsh *modol*, simply because he wished to take his place at the head of the clan. He had had him poisoned by his "own" Kurumbas, as it was put to me, after having first got the deceased's wife and two children out of the way in the same manner. The remaining members of the murdered man's family had fled in terror to Kakhwurkh *mad* and their house stood empty and forlorn at Melgarsh when I came back there in 1949. Karnoz was fined Rs. 12 by the *noim* for this [683] crime and warned that, if he persisted in practising sorcery, his house [623] would be set on fire, and he himself killed.

While working with the widow of Kuriolv (52), whom Rivers describes in such eloquent terms (see *The Todas*, pp. 551–2), my wife discovered [648] that, after having rid himself of rivals and wives alike by the habitual Toda method of indirect poisoning through the agency of the Kurumbas, he was himself murdered in the same way by his wife. He ended his life practically at the same time as his rival and victim Arjgur (56) who, in a neighbouring house at Kuur, died from the effects of the poison which he, Kuriolv, had himself administered to him.

During my second stay in the Nilgiris in 1949, Piliar (52) poisoned Tödhem of Apersgor because he had had a son by a woman whom Piliar had given up, believing her to be barren. The deed was com- [761] mitted by a Kurumba in Piliar's pay who gave the poison with some milk to Tödhen at a funeral which I attended. I later tried to get the [123] ailing man to hospital in Ootacamund in order to look better into his [757] case as well as to try to save him, but to no avail. I came up against

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595 her by Wunkwur. Kanvarsathi assured me that there were other such non-fraternal cases in outlying *munds*, but I did not come across any.

114 595 My impression was that the polyandry of the Todas is tending more and more to be restricted only to real brothers, in the way we use that word. Rivers in his book does mention a number of instances in which non-brothers, not even classificatory, are married to the same woman (see *The Todas*, pp. 515–516), but although I searched for some, I was unable to find any in existence today. Rivers already remarked in his time: "It is possible that at one time the polyandry of the Todas was not so strictly 'fraternal' as it is at present." (*The Todas*, p. 516.)

Rivers' description of the marriage of *matchuni* seems to imply that such weddings are monogamous, (see *The Todas*, pp. 512–513). I enquired about this when in the Nilgiris, and was told that it was not necessarily, although admittedly generally, so. There have been recorded cases of polygamous unions of this type, both polygynous and polyandrous, the latter being, rather naturally with the Todas, the more usual of the two. My informants could not take me to see any such case existing at the time, but assured me that they had known some. There was nothing in Toda custom to forbid it, they assured me (see also, *The Todas, Some Additions and Corrections to W. H. R. Rivers' Book, Observed in the Field*, by the same author, see Bibliography).

● 648 837 [114] Professor Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf has shown, in his short note about *Heriditary Friendships and Inter-Tribal Sex relations between Todas and Mudugas* (see Bibliography), that such relations of the Todas with their Muduga hereditary friends are definitely not limited to one man, but include a number of brothers. In this case, of course, we are not dealing with a regular marriage. Inversely, the Muduga headman whom he mentioned has access to the common wife of the two Toda brothers who are his friends, whenever he pays back their call in the Nilgiris, although the Mudugas themselves, like most more primitive people, do not practise polyandry. The type of established, even institutionalized, sex relation described here, seems definitely to follow the Toda pattern and not the Muduga one.

595 About sixty per cent of the Todas are polyandrous. I did not actually take count of exactly how many there were, because as the community is continually in flux with regard to marital arrangements, principally because of the *terershti* institution, figures would not have meant very much anyhow. But Kanvarsathi worked it out that the number of polyandrous marriages must involve just about that percentage of the whole tribe's number, and I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of

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married Nalsirwuf, ceased being head of his immediate family (although he was chief of the Melgarsh *modol*) and Pads, who already was the legal father of Mutnarsh, Kuddhue and Munbokwutn, became so in his place. The mother never has any very important say in family matters, and is treated as nothing more than an exalted kind of house servant.

As I have shown when discussing the question of Toda aggression, there is considerable jealousy among members of the tribe, in such matters as property and prestige. In sexual matters, however, there seems to be less of it, no doubt because their institutions allow for a number of outlets for their varying sexual fancy. Thus, the custom of *terershti* allows a man to carry off the neighbour's wife whom he covets, provided compensation in buffaloes is paid to the aggrieved party, and that of *mokhthoditi* for him to take as partner any woman of the tribe regardless of the moiety to which she belongs. There are other examples that could be quoted, such as, for instance, the privilege enjoyed by the lower class of Teivilkh priest of free access to all the women of the *mad* in which they serve and the Toda-Muduga exchange of wives of which Fürer-Haimendorf has spoken.

In spite of this, however, Kanvarsathi and various of my informants were unanimous in stating that sexual jealousy did exist among the Todas and, as they said, "more than it used to". There is a growing modern trend of resistance to *terershti*, the authority of the *noim* in such matters being often challenged now by an appeal to the Government. Again, informants claimed that the Todas did not take so readily any more to polyandry as before – although I, personally, could not see any falling away from this traditional form of marriage. The fact is, however, that jealousy with the Todas is not as curbed as it is with other polyandrous people. Because the property is divided between the brothers, it is as if jealousy were not banned as a serious threat to economic well-being as it is with others. The Todas, to put it briefly and in the language of polyanders elsewhere, "can afford to be jealous", and they are so at times with those outbursts of homicidal violence of which I have spoken earlier, when treating of the subject of their aggression.

Regulation of sexual intercourse in a Toda polyandrous household is again a matter af tacit understanding between the plural partners. Asked if there were any signalling system, my informants without exception ridiculed the idea, stating that it might perhaps have existed in the past but certainly did not now. During my entire stay in the Niligiris, I never came across any evidence of it. In the Melgarsh family, which I specially studied, it appeared that the common wife, Erzigwuf, had no

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still complaining that she had insufficient milk for both, I went to the bazaar and bought he a tin of Glaxo and a bottle of Gripe-ease. On the 30th May, there was a definite change. The boy started looking better, while the girl's health began to decline. Motsod had been to my bungalow early in the morning to ask me to come, as the little girl twin, he said, was unwell. She certainly looked listless and weak, and I wondered how this could have come about so quickly. I suspected that she was not being fed properly, and I imagined it was because the Todas had, all the same, decided to let her die, in accordance with their ancient custom of female infanticide, and of doing away with one of a pair of twins.

I went to the local government hospital, and requested the assistance of the Indian practitioner in charge, but he refused to come along, giving as an excuse that he could not possibly create a precedent by attending aboriginals at their homes. I tried to persuade Erzigwuf to travel to the hospital in my car, but she refused, saying that she was not well enough, and that the baby, besides, was too sick to stand the trip. Karnos put a word in too, stating that Western medicine was no good in a case like this, and that it was better for the child to remain at the *mad*. There was much wailing and crying over the bad health of the child, however, and to anybody unacquainted with Toda customs, this behaviour would have appeared perfectly genuine.

On the morning of the 31st, Munbokwutn turned up at my bungalow at 7.30 a.m. with the news that the child had died. I went immediately to Melgarsh and found them all assembled in the front room of the *Warthutthiarsh* (where all clan members must be brought, even from outlying *mads*, to die), wailing and lamenting loudly over the death of the baby. Toda visitors started arriving to take part in the mourning, and one of the first to crawl into the house on hands and knees, howling and sobbing ritually, was Erzigwuf's father, Tinmarsh of Pan *modol*. It all appeared perfectly real, and one nearly felt sorry for Mutnarsh, who was sitting outside the *arsh*, crying his eyes out, while Sodup, either from fright or in imitation, joined him heartily. Sodam, nearby, was quite indifferent as was also Munbokwutn, the youngest father. Only later, some four months afterwards did the Todas admit to my wife that they had let the little girl die, so that really all this exhibition of grief was purely conventional and, if not completely hypocritical, at least due to feelings of guilt or to the depressing effect which inexorable customs may have on people of this kind.

The funeral took place on June 1st, and as is the Toda custom, the little girl's dead body was first ceremoniously "wedded" to her *matchuni*,